AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (New) A method for stabilizing 1,4-dihydroxy-2naphthoic acid, which comprises reducing oxygen dissolved in a solution containing 1,4-dihydroxy-2-naphthoic acid.

13. (New) A method for producing food or drink containing 1,4-dihydroxy-2-naphthoic acid, which comprises stabilizing 1,4-dihydroxy-2-naphthoic acid by the method according to claim 12.

14. (New) The method according to claim 12 or 13, which further comprises adding an antioxidant as a stabilizing agent of 1,4-dihydroxy-2-naphthoic acid.

15. (New) The method according to claim 12 or 13, which further comprises conducting a heat treatment to the solution containing 1,4-dihydroxy-2-naphthoic acid after reducing the oxygen dissolved in said solution.

16. (New) The method according to claim 15, wherein the oxygen dissolved in said solution is reduced during the heat treatment.

17. (New) The method according to claim 15, wherein the oxygen dissolved in said solution is reduced after the heat treatment.

18. (New) The method according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the solution is at least one liquid food or drink selected from the group consisting of a milk, a drink containing a dairy product, a lactic acid bacteria beverage, a soy-milk, a vegetable juice, a fruit juice, a tea drink, a coffee drink, a cocoa drink, a sports drink, an energy drink, a carbonated beverage, an alcoholic beverage and a soup.

19. (New) The method according to claims 12 or 13, wherein the solution is a solution containing a milk or a dairy product.

20. (New) The method according to claims 12 or 13, wherein the oxygen dissolved in said solution is reduced by substituting with an inert gas.

21. (New) The method according to claim 13, wherein a part of or all of the processes is carried out under conditions in which the oxygen is reduced.

22. (New) Food or drink produced by the method according to claim 13.